

The Viavi fake, being, as it is, such a monumental one, and so very profitable to those admirable citizens and pious gentlemen, the Law brothers, has created many would-be similar fakes. A short time ago we referred to one—Pond's tampons. There are many of them and from some things that seem to act as straws in a breeze, "olivoint" would appear to be headed in that direction. The Millennial Medical Company, with its "millennial medicated capsules," is certainly in the list, if one may judge from a circular recently distributed. But these little fellows are just clumsy; true, they may be also deadly, as when they imply that cancer may be prevented or cured by the use of their stuff. They all forget that what has made the monumental success of the Viavi fake is not the fake itself—it is the keen, shrewd, cunning brain of the little Law brother, one of San Francisco's most wealthy and distinguished citizens. It is not the three little shells and the elusive little pea that are so valuable to the "shell game" faker; it is the dextrous way in which he works the fake. The promoters of these clumsy imitators of the Viavi fake will never get to be directors of the Young Men's Christian Association; they have not the guiding genius of the little Law brother to manipulate the fake; and you can bet he would not rub "viavi cerate" on his belly if he had appendicitis!

From the Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, comes a little vest-pocket pamphlet with the title "Physicians' Pocket Reference to the International List of Causes of Death." (Comment for thought: There is nothing pertaining to medicine or public health that comes to medical men from a medical or public health department of the national government. Matters of medical or public health interest percolate through the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Commerce and Labor or the Treasury Department. Everything is worth something, commercially, except life and health!) To make a guess at the probable truth, this little booklet is the result of the trying problems presented in compiling the last census rather than a voluntary effort on the part of the government to advance or in any way promote medical science or the public health. But whatever the reason for its publication—and one should not "look a gift horse in the mouth"—it ought to be in the possession of every physician in the United States and it ought to be carefully read—and followed as closely as may be. If one were to follow some of the suggestions closely, he might, at times, be somewhat prolix. For instance, in answering specifically and in detail No. 35: "Disseminated Tuberculosis (Specify organs affected)." One is reminded of a distinguished member of the Society who, some years ago, reported the post-mortem findings in a case of leprosy in a Chinaman who had been under the observation of this physician for a number of years. The gentleman in question, in presenting the specimens, was very apologetic. *He stated that the post-mortem had been performed in a small hut and in*

very hot weather and therefore he was able to bring with him, and present to the Society, ONLY the brain, the spinal cord, the right arm, the left hand, the right foot and a few miscellaneous specimens of dermatic lesions!

The old fight for merely decent compensation for making examinations for life insurance risks is by no means dead. Only a few months ago it was brought very much to life in San Mateo County. The New York Life Insurance Company, one of the richest and one of the oldest and worst offenders in the matter of cutting fees, had refused to pay a minimum of \$5.00 to a member of the Society who had been its examiner. He refused to accept the proffered \$3.00, declined to make any more examinations for that company and reported the whole matter to the Society at a regular meeting. Physicians are so easy-going in all their personal business matters that they have made themselves the prey of almost any one who may undertake to impose upon them. It would have been so easy, a few years ago when the New York Life started this cut-rate insurance fee business, if all the examiners had absolutely refused to accept the reduced fees or make the examinations, and if the newly appointed examiners had done the same thing. Now, however, it is different. Some of the companies have so much money and so much business that they do not care very materially whether they get any more or not. But the arrogant New York Life would come to time if all the physicians in the country would refuse to make examinations for \$3.00.

The suit against Dr. Rae Smith, of Los Angeles, for \$50,000 for malpractice, was recently fought out in the courts, the verdict being for the defendant, Dr. Smith, the jury taking about ten minutes in coming to their decision.

It is said to be one of the most remarkable suits in the history of American jurisprudence. It consumed nine days in the trial and the plaintiff, during the course of the suit, submitted to an operation in order to demonstrate that he did *not* have a tumor in his abdomen which some half-dozen or more physicians testified *did* exist and which two physicians testified did not exist. So confident was he in his own judgment that he insisted upon the operation; the tumor was found to be present, and the man who, previously, was fairly comfortable (with a colostomy, to be sure), has sacrificed his life. This is the first suit to be tried in court and defended by the Medical Society of the State of California under our Medical Defense plan, and the outcome is gratifying in the extreme. The attack upon Dr. Smith, whose treatment was absolutely correct, was exceedingly bitter and it is most unfortunate that the daily papers, which gave considerable space to the melodramatic incidents of the trial, should not have given as much space to the final decision of the jury and the vindication of Dr. Smith.